

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for selecting the nature and/or form of an alert used to announce a call made by a user participating in a customised alert service, the method including:
 - a. establishing a customised alert service configuration for a participating user, the customised alert service configuration being stored on one or more network accessible devices;
 - b. the participating user using a first communications terminal to make a call to a second communications terminal, the first and second communications terminals being remote from the one or more network accessible devices, the call being supported by a first communications service;
 - c. the second communications terminal sending a request to one of the one or more network accessible devices, requesting an alert descriptor in accordance with the customised alert service configuration;
 - e.d. the network accessible device identifying a chosen alert descriptor from using the customised alert service configuration for the participating user;
 - d.e. the network accessible device transmitting the chosen alert descriptor to the second communications terminal ~~fetching the chosen alert descriptor from a location remote from the first communications terminal and the second communications terminal~~; and
 - e.f. the second communications terminal announcing the call by activating an alert using the chosen alert descriptor.

2. (Currently Amended) A method for selecting the nature and/or form of an alert used to announce a call made by a user participating in a customised alert service, the method including:

- a. establishing a customised alert service configuration for a participating user which includes multiple alert descriptors, the customised alert service configuration being stored on one or more network accessible devices;
- b. the participating user using a first communications terminal to make a call to a second communications terminal, the call being supported by a first communications service; and
- c. the second communications terminal announcing the call by activating an alert using a chosen alert descriptor;
- d. wherein the chosen alert descriptor is selected from the participating user's multiple alert descriptors according to the customised alert service configuration for the participating user.;

3. (Currently Amended) A method for selecting the nature and/or form of an alert used to announce a call made by a user participating in a customised alert service, the method including:

- a. establishing a customised alert service configuration for a participating user, the customised alert service configuration being stored on one or more network accessible devices;
- b. the participating user using a first communications terminal to make a call to a second communications terminal, the call being supported by a first communications service; and
- c. the second communications terminal announcing the call by activating an alert using a chosen alert descriptor;

wherein the alert descriptor is chosen according to the customised alert service configuration for the participating user;

and wherein recently used alert descriptors are cached at the second communications terminal ~~or on a network accessible device~~ ready for rapid re-use.

4. (Currently Amended) A method for selecting the nature and/or form of an alert used to announce a call made by a user participating in a customised alert service, the method including:

- a. providing a range of alert descriptors available for selection and use by participating users;
- b. establishing a customised alert service configuration for a participating user including one or more alert descriptors selected from the available range of alert descriptors, the customised alert service configuration being stored on one or more network accessible devices;
- c. the participating user using a first communications terminal to make a call to a second communications terminal, the call being supported by a first communications service; and
- d. the second communications terminal announcing the call by activating an alert using ~~an chosen~~ alert descriptor; ~~wherein the chosen alert descriptor is chosen in accordance to with~~ the customised alert service configuration for the participating user.

5. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein ~~the selecting and/or providing of at least one alert descriptor establishing the customised alert service configuration~~ includes selecting an alert descriptor from a set of available alert descriptors.

6. (Original) A method according to claim 5 wherein the set of selectable alert descriptors is contained on a network accessible device.

7. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 2 wherein alert descriptor information is transmitted from one communications terminal to another during the course of a voice call between two or more terminals.
8. (Original) A method according to claim 7 wherein the transmission of alert descriptor information occurs:
 - a. during pauses in voice conversation; or
 - b. after voice conversation has ended; or
 - c. interleaved with voice conversation.
9. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 2 wherein the establishing of a customised alert service includes providing information which identifies the participating user or first communications terminal or first communications service.
10. (Original) A method according to claim 9 wherein the chosen alert descriptor is chosen according to processing of the identification information.
11. (Original) A method according to claim 10 wherein the processing is performed by the second communications terminal.
12. (Original) A method according to claim 10 wherein the processing is performed by a server device.
13. (Original) A method according to claim 9 wherein the establishing of a customised alert service configuration for a participating user includes selecting and/or providing ancillary information for the participating user.
14. (Original) A method according to claim 13 wherein the chosen alert descriptor is chosen according to processing of the ancillary information and the identification information.

15. (Original) A method according to claim 14 wherein the processing of the ancillary information includes processing variables associated with the ancillary information, the associated variables selected from:

- a. temporal variables;
- b. seasonal and cultural variables;
- c. geographical variables;
- d. proximity variables; and
- e. personal variables.

16. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 2 wherein the chosen alert descriptor is communicated to the second communications terminal from the first communications terminal.

17. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1-2 wherein the chosen alert descriptor is communicated to the second communications terminal from a network accessible device.

18. (Original) A method according to claim 16 wherein the chosen alert descriptor is communicated using the first communication service.

19. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 16 wherein the chosen alert descriptor is communicated using a communication path other than the first communication service.

20. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 18 wherein the chosen alert descriptor has been communicated to the second communications terminal prior to a call set-up process.

21. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 18 wherein the chosen alert descriptor is communicated to the second communications terminal during a call set up process.

22. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 18 wherein the chosen alert descriptor is communicated to the second communications terminal asynchronous to a call set up process.

23. (Original) A method according to claim 19 wherein the alternative communications path makes use of the Internet.

24. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the customised alert service operates within a network of a plurality of communications terminals and servers, wherein at least some of the communications terminals and servers participate in a caching scheme which allows alert descriptors to be sourced from a plurality of different servers or communications terminals within the network.

25. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein users who receive calls are able to exercise control over the kinds of customised alerts that they are willing to receive.

26. (Original) A method according to claim 25 wherein alerts are categorised according to their nature and/or content, and users who receive calls may choose to receive only particular categories of alerts.

27. (Original) A method according to claim 25 wherein a user who receives calls may elect that a call be announced by a combination of two different alerts, one selected by the receiving user and one selected by a calling user.

28 (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the call is any one of the group of a telephone call, a voice over internet protocol call, a videophone call, a data call, a whiteboard sharing call, an instant messaging session, a multi-user gaming session.

29. (Currently Amended) A computerised system for enabling the nature and/or form of an alert used to announce a call made by a user participating in the system to a

communications terminal participating in the system to be determined in accordance with the participating user's preferences, including:

- a. a plurality of communications terminals, at least some of which are capable of receiving and acting on an alert descriptor(s) and calls associated with alert descriptor(s);
- b. a data entry device for creating a customised alert service for a participating user;
- c. configuration software for configuring the participating user's customised alert service, the configuring of the participating user's customised alert service including selecting and/or providing at least one alert descriptor for use with the participating user's customised alert service;
- d. a database for storing the participating user's customised alert service configuration;
- e. processing means for choosing an alert descriptor for use with the call made by the participating user to a receiving communications terminal; and
- f. Means of communicating alert descriptors to the receiving communications terminal;

wherein the chosen alert descriptor is selected in accordance with the configuration of the participating user's customised alert service.

30. (Original) A system according to claim 29 wherein the processing means is a communications terminal associated with the participating user.

31. (Original) A system according to claim 29 wherein the processing means is the receiving communications terminal.

32. (Original) A system according to claim 29 wherein the processing means is a server device.